

March 22, 2011

A regular meeting of the Council of the City of Bedford, Virginia, was held in the Council Hall of the Municipal Building at 7:00 p.m., March 22, 2011.

Members present: Mayor W. D. Tharp; Councilwoman Mary L. Flood; Councilman Guy E. Murray, Jr.; Councilman Steve C. Rush; Councilman C. G. Stanley, Jr.; Councilman James A. Vest; and Vice Mayor Robert T. Wandrei

Members absent: None

Staff present: City Manager Charles P. Kolakowski; City Attorney W. W. Berry, IV; and Clerk of the Council Teresa W. Hatcher.

Mayor Tharp opened the meeting and led all present in saying the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor Tharp declared that the minutes of a regular Council meeting held on March 8, 2011, were approved as distributed.

City Manager Kolakowski reported on the following:

- There will be an Electronics Recycling Day on Saturday, April 2 at the Farmer's Market from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon. The City Manager said that the recycling will include electronics, such as computer monitors and printers, TVs, free paper shredding and collection of oil based and latex paint. Details will be included in the newspaper, distributed in the utility bills, on the City's website, and Facebook.
- City bulk cleanup – the week of April 4 through April 8
- Spring Clean-up Day sponsored by the Keep Bedford Beautiful Commission is scheduled for April 9 from 9:00 a.m. until noon.
- The sidewalk repair program has begun – he cautioned everyone to keep alert for the construction areas.
- Mickey VanDerwerker, City Representative to the County School Board, will give a report at the end of the meeting.

Councilman Vest stated that he received a hand delivered letter from Betsy Thomas, 991 Ashland Avenue, earlier in the day and asked that the letter be included in the minutes.

The letter from Betsy Thomas follows:

991 Ashland Ave.  
Bedford, VA 23423

Bedford City Council  
Bedford, VA 24523  
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HAND DELIVERED TO MR. JAMES A. VEST

Madam and Gentlemen:

As a resident of Ashland Avenue I am concerned about the potential repurposing of Bedford Primary School from a school building to a Central Office building or

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some other use, especially with regard to how it will affect the health, safety and property values of our neighborhood.

I realize in order to preserve all cooperative efforts for the reversion, adjustments may need to be made in the contract that exists between the City of Bedford and the County of Bedford regarding the use of the Bedford Primary School building. I respectfully request that a thorough study of the impact of this transition from school to office or other purpose on the health, safety and economic welfare of all residents of College Avenue, Mountain Avenue and Ashland Avenue be conducted by the City of Bedford Planning Commission. .

I further ask that no building permit or permit for occupancy of the Bedford Primary School building be issued until the findings of this study have been completed and made available to all the residents of all three streets. These residents should be allowed an adequate opportunity to review this study and consider its findings.

If problems regarding health, safety and economic welfare are found in any sections of this neighborhood then these problems need to be resolved to the satisfaction of the residents impacted before any building or occupancy permits can be issued.

I believe that failure to take this precaution may have an extremely adverse outcome on the infrastructure and character of this neighborhood.

Thank you for your time, and I hope you will carefully consider this matter.

Yours truly,  
Betsy Thomas

Mr. Warner, Assistant City Manager, spoke about the zoning issues raised by Ms. Thomas: the property is zoned R-1, which does permit a school building, but anything else would require zoning activity by the Planning Commission and City Council.

Councilman Vest, Chairman of the Finance Committee, stated the Committee met earlier in the evening and reviewed the budget. Mr. Vest said the budget is somewhat close to what was projected, but it is still very precarious as to how the budget will end the year.

City Manager Kolakowski stated that this meeting would be adjourned until March 29, 2011, for a budget work session.

On motion by Councilman Vest, seconded by Councilman Murray, voted upon and carried by a roll call vote, Council adopted the Consent Agenda which consisted of the following item: reappointment of Mrs. Ellen Wandrei to the Regional Library Board, said term to expire June 30, 2015. Roll call vote follows:

Councilwoman Flood	aye
Councilman Murray	aye

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Councilman Rush	aye
Councilman Stanley	aye
Councilman Vest	aye
Vice Mayor Wandrei	abstained
Mayor Tharp	aye

The following individuals gave presentations regarding FY 2011-12 budget requests for their organizations:

- Tiffaney Musgrove, Captain, Bedford Life Saving Crew. The Mayor directed the Public Services Director to check into electrical problems at the Crew Hall.
- Brenda Lipscomb, Acting Executive Director, Central Virginia Area Agency on Aging
- Nancy Cottingham, Chief Executive Officer, Central Virginia Community Services
- Richard Noble, President, Wharton Memorial Foundation Board

Ms. Mickey VanDerwerker, Representative to the County School Board, gave an overview of the Bedford County School Board budget process. Ms. VanDerwerker reviewed issues that have been discussed by the School Board, such as the possibility of consolidating Bedford Primary School and Bedford Elementary School and closing Bedford Primary School; elimination of the Drivers Ed program; not allowing any zone transfers; changing school start times; 4 day work week in the summer; eliminating early retirement; sports; blended learning.

Mayor Tharp asked Ms. VanDerwerker to find out how many students take Driver's Ed and the number of students transferring into and out of the City schools.

Ms. VanDerwerker stated that any time the County School Board discusses the City/County Contract she excuses herself from that section of the meeting.

The Mayor said Ms. VanDerwerker may want to check with the School Board attorney about that.

It was the consensus of Council that Ms. VanDerwerker attend all of the meetings.

Mayor Tharp adjourned the meeting at 8:22 p.m. until Tuesday, March 29, 2011, at 6:00 p.m. for a budget work session.